

Introduction

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From the break-up of the German Peasant War in 1525 to the end of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms in 1651, Europe was marked by the violence of denominational clashes and religious conflict that made possible a new social map, one in which the space of community tolerance had been narrowed. The Edict of Nantes (1598) was a stronghold of collective tolerance yet would become a significant factor in the fratricidal battles between French Protestants and Catholics; until it was removed in 1685, the Edict converted both communities into subjects of the same king. From its very prologue, this founding text of religious co-existence (as the Edict is known in contemporary historiography) aimed at the re-establishment of peace within the Realm, which meant the imposition of a necessary evil «under such a rule as not to provoke riots or troubles between them»¹.

Certainly, public disturbances of the peace had taken place within the context of religious differences, and such clashes, themselves feeding religious wars, hid a cause much deeper than that restricted to theological controversies or the institutional questioning of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. It was in fact a debate on authority by means of which the complex relations between the power of churches and states would be examined. From a denominational viewpoint, historians have frequently noted Luther's contribution to the idea of democracy among German peasants (Lefebvre 1973), thus showing that most social crises in the Modern Age found their solution in the imposition of political authority; this was justified in the name of the commonwealth and

¹ In French: «avec telle règle qu'il n'y ait point pour cela de trouble et de tumulte» (Garrison 1987, 27).

of the duty to obey. The Edict of Nantes itself must be understood as a political strategy to control the outrages caused by religious intolerance, a topic that has been dealt with in a broad and wide-ranging literature since the 1970s, and in this regard the outstanding *Histoire de la tolérance au siècle de la Réforme* (1955) by the French Jesuit Joseph Leclerc should be acknowledged.

Notwithstanding, the devices used by different European nations to stop wars, intolerance and riots varied in their duration, and their results were uneven. This phenomenon must not lead us to see only unstable elements in the denominational peculiarities of each country, those which were reluctant to accept the political and constitutional commitments to peace. Would Calvinist intransigence and the influence exerted by Calvin's dogma on the large number of theories of resistance be enough to explain the vicissitudes of the peace in France, in the Netherlands or in Germany at the beginning of the seventeenth century? To answer this it would probably be necessary to explore the sources of the principles of opposition and the tendency toward rebellion here: the extension and effects of the principle *cuius regio eius religio* in the assertion of the modern state, the nature of the political agreement signed by the communities in conflict, and the modalities of accepting denominational exclusivism. All these issues constitute the limits of a reality in which social conflict is measured in terms of a resistance, both prior and subsequent, to the decrees of pacification in the reformist Europe of the Modern Age.

Consequently, studying rebellion and resistance practices in those spaces shared by communities that endorsed one of the reformations (the Catholic or the Protestant one) in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries involves taking into account a conceptual and terminological pluralism able to encapsulate hermeneutic mutations from the previous ten years, by means of a debate of a comparative nature on the conflicts gripping Europe between 1520 and the mid-seventeenth century (Yardeni and Zinguer 2004). In order to provide these periods of confrontation and pacification with a context, we must start with a preliminary reflection that illustrates three unavoidable problems within the historiographic debate. First, the polysemy of terms used by anyone dealing with the universe of Reformations in the Modern Age. Second, the abundance of factors accounting for the break-up of the rebellion or the appearance of resistance against the political and legal strategies for modernizing the state. And third, to overcome a traditional approach to Reformations that focuses on the study of personal narratives, making up for the vital changes of intellectual leaderships within the winding course of communities and their collective interests (Daussy 2006).

As to the first issue, the polysemy of terms leads the researcher to a debate of a nominalist type, and we must note here the concepts «rebellion» and «resistance» as well as «reformation» and «denominational conflict», for which new terms have emerged: inter-denominational, trans-denominational, multi-religious or inter-religious. The forms or manifestations of this rebellion claim their own lexical field, one which includes an array of terms: affront, blasphemies, preaching, sermons, pamphlets, libels, etc. To take an obvious example, for the Frenchman Nicolas Foucault, author of *Prônes pour tous les Dimanches de l'année* (1669), blasphemy represents «a sin of rebellion attempting against the power of the Father, a sin of bewilderment fighting the wisdom of the Son and a sin of stubbornness injuring the good of the Holy Spirit»².

The second issue is linked to the origin and practices of rebellion, since controversialists themselves linked the chronological origin of Protestantism with former religious protests. Pierre Nicole pointed this out in *Préjugés légitimes contre les calvinistes* (1671), associating Calvinists with Valdese rebels, Albigenses, Wycliffe and John Huss (Dompnier 1985, 50). Recent historiography has embarked on a new way of exploring written sources, focusing on their relations with other types of supporting sources, and thus making it easier for us to read about the reformers and find in them renewed expressions of the experience and interpretation of the Reformations, especially Calvinism, considered by the historian Denis Crouzet to be at the root of a hermeneutic revolution.

The third and final issue relating to reflections on the idea of rebellion or resistance in Reformation Europe is to choose a position in order to carry out analyses on the impact of the behaviour of the rebels. The profile and description of individual lives diminishes the dialogue between the leaders of the Reformation and their followers, not to mention their opponents; thus, fictitious borders arise between individuals and spaces of rebellion. In addition, we know that communitarian frontiers are not as firm as their rhetorical constructs, since scholarship has thus far shown how difficult it is to determine in which aspects of a supposedly antagonistic daily life communities oppose each other.

One of the necessary starting points of this volume is the acknowledgment that the theory of political resistance in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Protestant thought was developed by myriad authors throughout Europe who approached it in different ways. Their reflections on the concept of resist-

² In French: «un péché de rébellion et de mépris qui choque la puissance de Père, un péché d'aveuglement qui combat la sagesse du Fils, un péché de malice et d'endurcissement qui blesse la bonté du Saint-Esprit» (Foucault 1866, 758).

ance, the circumstances that would call for resistance and that would sanction it, and the agents who could legitimately initiate and manage the process of the deposition of political, religious and royal authorities undoubtedly constitute the backbone of the political implications and effects of the Reformation in the whole continent. The underlying dilemma here is whether obedience to the law of God should prevail over the obedience due to what was often described as a tyrannical and idolatrous monarch, one who was nevertheless acknowledged as a heavenly appointed authority. In this context, the notions of tyranny and liberty gain particular relevance, as the understanding thereof sustains a theory that ultimately legitimises political resistance to a monarch who does not share Reformed beliefs.

The prominence of the ideas of resistance in the shaping of a revolutionary political discourse emerging from authors supportive of the Reformation accounts for the many scholarly studies devoted to these matters. To name but a few, consider the general theoretical overview provided by Skinner (1978), the work of Shoenberger (1977, 1979) on the Lutheran theory of resistance, and the works by Skinner (1980) and Gamble (1984) on the Calvinist theory of resistance. As for *Politisierung*, a concept developed in German historiography over the last decade, we might mention Hugues Daussy (2002) on the tense relations between Huguenots and the French monarchy, and Denis Crouzet (1999) on Calvinism in France. As is now generally accepted, Luther's political attitude to the legitimacy of resistance "in the 1530s coincides with the menace of an imperial campaign to crush his church: in *Warnung an die lieben Deutschen* (1531) Luther warns that a declaration of war on the part of the Emperor would discredit him as a legitimate magistrate, and hence make him the object of a legitimate armed resistance. The Calvinists, then, repeat and advance the arguments for political resistance developed by the Lutherans. A number of other studies have focused their attention on specific countries, such as the literature on England and Scotland, and by extension, on authors such as John Ponet, Christopher Goodman, and John Knox (Vesey 1961, Walzer 1963, Danner 1977, Greaves 1980, and 1982, Bowler 1987, Dawson 1990, and 1991, and 1998, Chavura 2011). Elsewhere, theoretical notions of rebellion have been related to socio-economic tensions and thus linked with popular revolts or uprisings led by peasants in which religion also played a part (Crossley 1974, Blickle 1981, Beer 1982, Greenblatt 1983, Wood 2002), or seen in the light of particular instances of revolts, as in the case of Magdeburg (Olson 1972). Coinciding with the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, there was, as expected, an avalanche of publica-

tions on this subject in 2017, too many to cite or refer to exhaustively here. In French alone, the journal *L'Histoire* dedicated a special issue to Luther (*Luther 1517, le grand schisme*, Revue L'Histoire, 2017), presenting him as a «rebel monk» and the Reformation as a revolutionary movement. The collective works of Michel Bertrand (2017), and of Olivier Christin and Yves Krumenacker (2017) also stand out among those in French published in the year of the commemoration.

The current volume explores both theoretical notions of resistance as understood in early modernity, as well as a representative sample of actual practices of rebellion, that is, uprisings and revolts either encouraged and justified, or suffocated and crushed, by Protestant authorities. Indeed, as some of the essays here discuss, Catholic discourses understand Protestantism as a rebellious and subversive religious and political ideology. Thus, «the theory of armed resistance», when put into practice, and from the perspective of the opposite faction, was nothing other than «rebellion». In other words, what for the fathers of the «theories of resistance» was exactly that, «resistance», for the authorities who faced such resistance it was, rather, «rebellion». «Rebellion» is also an interesting word in the sense that all parties (Catholic, Protestant, denominations regardless) agreed that it was undesirable. John Christopherson, confessor to Queen Mary of England, and Master of Trinity College Cambridge, published in London in 1554 *An exhortation to all menne to take hede and beware of rebellion*. The Belgian monk Petrus Frarinus, a Catholic, wrote the Latin tract *Oratio Petri Frarini male reformandae religionis nomine arma non sumpserunt sectarii nostris temporis habita* (published in Antwerp in 1565 by the Catholic publisher John Fowler), which in its subsequent English translation is entitled *An oration against the unlawful insurrections of the Protestants of our time under pretence to refourme religion* (1566). But also in England, some decades later, Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Winchester and member of the Church of England, would write *The true difference between Christian subjection and unchristian rebellion* (1585), in which he says: «we may not rebel [...] but disobey» (Bilson 1585, L17v). Rebellion was thus something feared by everyone, often seen as an uncontrollable force which, if unleashed, would lead to social chaos.

This volume offers an overview of some of the meanings and approaches to these key concepts from the perspective of authors from a representative sample of countries, from Western Europe to the British colonies in North America. What follows, thus, is a collection of eleven essays that examine either case studies of rebellion, or the discourse of rebellion put forward

by both the Catholic and the Protestant sides. The studies are grouped into five general themes. First, reflections on the idea of rebellion as fashioned by the Catholic accounts of the Reformation. This is explored in the essays by Rocío G. Sumillera and Fabrice Quero, which focus on the language of the wars of the *Comunidades* in Castile in the 1520s and how it shaped the discourse in Spain regarding the Protestant Reformation, and by Sophie Tejedor's analysis of the readings and interpretations of the Amboise Conspiracy. The second group of essays considers the rhetorical construction of the idea of rebellion within Protestantism through the adaptation of Biblical images and themes (in the essay by Benjamin Heidenreich on the language to conceptualise the German Peasants' War) and through the writing of a play based on the reinterpretation of notions of martyrdom and religious sacrifice (Louise Frappier's essay on the anonymous play *Tragédie du sac de Cabrières* on the massacre at Luberon in 1545). In the third section, Geneviève Gross and Adrien Aracil both consider textual accounts, understood as chronicles, of the development of the Reformation in France: respectively, Nicolas Volcyr de Sérrouville's chronicle of the 1525 uprising in Alsace, and the Duc de Rohan's *Mémoires*, which Adrien Aracil reads as a chronicle of the 1610-1620 Huguenot uprisings. In the following group, Christian Mühling analyses the debates around the Second War of Villmergen in Switzerland, and Stephan Steiner discusses Protestantism in the Austrian state of Carinthia in the 1730s, both of these essays providing an opportunity to reflect on the intersection between rebellious action and political practice. In the final group, the experience of Reformed churches in the American British colonies and the conflicts ensuing from their political expectations and practice are discussed by Bertrand Van Ruymbeké and Elena Lioznova in their concluding contributions. The volume closes with a conclusion by Manuela Águeda García-Garrido, and with an epilogue by Andreas Würzler which sets the eleven essays within a series of current historiographical trends in terms of approaches to resistance and rebellion.

The various understandings of rebellion, the many forms of rebellious practices, the dissimilar ways in which uprisings were assessed and explicative narratives about them constructed, and, ultimately, the way in which all of this sheds light on the political and religious foundation of early modern individual, group and national identities all come to the fore in this volume. These essays aim to offer new interpretative clues on the dialectic and dialogic relations between obedience and resistance established by Protestant communities throughout modern Europe, and even on the other side of the

Atlantic—a phenomenon emerging mainly in late modernist historiography as an attempt to explain the channels of expression and the agents of rebellion as resistance to power in Ancien Regime societies (Barbiche 2005, Kaiser 2008, Bercé 2013, Aubert 2015).

Approaching theoretical sources of the revolutionary movement and the links between the latter with the Protestant mind-world is one of the main objectives of this volume. The authors here aim to provide new elements (legal, literary, religious, theoretical) for the analysis of the time and the limits within which the tolerance of the state was operative: this is a reliable marker of the opposition views on the Protestant side. From this viewpoint, other perspectives become less important: the measures of institutional repression which do not account for the resistance movements in periods of pardon. These movements occur again and again in France in the 1570s, after the Peace of St. Germain, when Protestants were able to practice their rites freely in four cities of the Realm (Cognac, La Charité, La Rochelle and Montauban). Likewise, there are frequent protests of Reformed communities under the Edict of Nantes. The case of Rennes is symptomatic in 1613, 1653 and 1661. For many authors the ideas of resistance and rebellion produced during periods of pardon, on the Protestant side, contributed to the failure of projects of concord in a period deeply marked by denominational trouble. Along these lines we must include the apologetic speeches spread after the tragic events of the night of St. Bartholomew in Paris, 1572. These texts attacked tyrannical foreign intrusions into the politics of the French nation, stressing the participation of the Italian circle of Catherine of Medicis in government affairs. The abundance of such messages constitute a conscious form of resistance to power. The content of those speeches on the breach of the harmony of the State stems from a current of thought reaching across Europe in the final quarter of the sixteenth century, one which accounts for the fact that Admiral Colligny, a Huguenot leader, appears in many pamphlets as a plotter similar in character to Tacitus (Barbiche 2005). Notwithstanding, taking into account the Protestant resistance against the establishment, identifying them with signs which help to understand the denominational root of popular movements in the protests during the Modern Age, this volume tries to shun the usual view in historiography holding that the mind-world is built up in opposition to Roman Catholicism, building on a sort of denominational dialectic between both dogmas in times of dialogue and negotiation (Léonard 2016). Actually, this resistance may be understood as a civil debate in urban spaces in opposition to institutional strongholds of the State, which allowed the spurs of a violent confrontation to be assuaged. All in all, the theological

essence supports the ideas and the social force of reformed communities in the Modern Age, and this claims that the grace of God is stronger than the resistance of Man. Such a principle does not oppose the principle of armed resistance and neither does it discount the need for rebellion against the wishes of the government; in this sense, one has only to think of the public reflections by the Protestants in France in 1560 that paved the way for the legitimacy of a certain political resistance within civil society.

The volume explores the five political categories within which Protestant action can be classified in the Modern Age: (1) the rejection of tyranny, (2) the right to armed resistance, (3) the principle of double alliance, (4) conditional obedience, and (5) the people's shared sovereignty. By means of different registers, several public uses and sources of inspiration, above all the Greek-Roman world, some Protestant leaders reflected on monarchy and its representative institutions, appealing, to put it in anachronical terms, to a particular ideal of democracy. We might recall that the philo-Calvinist François Hotman in *Francogalia*, published in Latin in 1573, proposes the possibility that magistrates (what today we might call public officials) can begin a just war to reach the goal of welfare. Equally, Huguenot political thought shows the theory of a constitutional contract between the king and the people, which is a foreword to political ideas of theocratic grounds, as developed by Théodore de Bèze in *Droit des magistrats* (1575).

Paradoxically, the colloquies and debates arising within the religious confrontations during the Modern Age extend over a century (1598-1685) in the case of France, which coincides with the acceptance of monarchic authority, the only way of dealing with the protection and respect of many denominations (Maurer and Vincent 2005). As a result of the revoking of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV, a broad phenomenon of Protestant renewal emerged, due both to its effects and its implications. From then on, French Protestants had to convert or, if they refused to foreswear, to depart, and the case of the region of Lozère is representative here. Either way it was necessary to adapt the reformed theories to the new lawful situation imposed by the State. In this way, those who departed had to become part of the reformed communities in Europe or overseas which, as temporary receivers, also had to adapt to the practices of the recently-arrived in the so called «Huguenot refuge» (Augeron and Van Ruymbeke 2012). During the process of adaptation to the new denominational situation there was a sort of underground dissidence which showed the flexibility of the Protestant Reformation in its social and political dimensions.

To conclude, the formula of resistance, either passive or armed, as a rebellious practice among the Protestants or as tool for dialogue between denominations, clearly illustrates that the debate about the forms of political and social action in Ancien Regime societies has not yet been resolved or agreed upon by authors in the field. We hope that this contribution may shed some light on the influence of the theological Protestant substratum in the development of political clashes.

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